

H. T. S. T.

“ When truth or virtue an affront endures,
 “ Th’ affront is mine, my Lord, and should be yours.
 “ Mine, as a friend to ev’ry worthy mind ;
 “ And mine, as man, who feel for all mankind.”



A
 LETTER,

RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO

The RIGHT REVEREND FATHER in GOD,
 HENRY REGINALD,

By DIVINE PERMISSION,

LORD BISHOP of EXETER;

CONTAINING

A VINDICATION OF TRUTH,
 AN EXPOSURE OF DETRACTION,

AND

AN EARNEST APPEAL TO HIS LORDSHIP,

As a constituted GUARDIAN of the CHURCH,

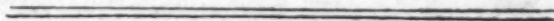
FOR THE

PRESERVATION of her PEACE, DIGNITY, and PROSPERITY.



BY

One of her humble, but most affectionate FRIENDS.



EXETER:

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A LETTER, &c.

MY LORD,

THE respect which I entertain for your character and office, and which I am desirous of manifesting in my present address to you, must be appreciated from the sentiments and language of the following pages; since, if it does not appear there, it would be in vain for me (like Mr. Polwhele) to employ my first page in an ostentatious profession of it.

I am aware, that on the appearance of this pamphlet, it may be asked, what business I have to trouble your Lordship with my opinions: I can only answer, just as much as Mr. Polwhele had to favor you with his. That gentleman, having experienced

rienced the inconvenience of corresponding with one who possessed leisure to answer him, has of late directed his epistolary favours to your Lordship; well assured, that you will be prevented from replying, by more honourable and useful avocations.

I cannot suppose, my Lord, that you have been an uninterested spectator of the combat to which Mr. Polwhele has provoked Dr. Hawker; neither will I presume to surmise with what sentiments you may have contemplated its progress; unless, indeed, I venture to assure myself, that you lament the improvident zeal of him, who, by beginning the attack, has exposed himself, the profession which he bears, and the cause which he is bound to maintain, to the contumely of the light-minded and foolish.

It is needless, and therefore would be impertinent for me to remind your Lordship, that the times in which we live, are "perilous" ones—that Christianity and its Ministers are exposed to attacks, against which (under God) the labours of those Ministers must constitute their soundest bulwark. The repression, therefore, of any proceedings

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ings among the Clergy of your Diocese, which militate against the interests of that sacred cause in which they are engaged, must doubtless form an important exercise of that episcopal jurisdiction, which by Divine Providence is delegated to your trust. The designation of the high and holy office with which you are invested, imports an authority to employ the most minute investigation of the conduct of every person, who is subject to your spiritual superintendence. I therefore feel confident, that I do not make an improper appeal, when I thus publicly and solemnly call upon your Lordship to stand forward as the arbitrator of a contest, which, as it ought never to have been begun, cannot too speedily be terminated. Let not Mr. Polwhele be suffered any longer to combine in his pages the record of a brother's infirmities (if such indeed they be) with that of his own bitterness; neither let Dr. Hawker be called off from the duties of his ministry, to a vindication of his character, from every idle story which a distempered fancy may fabricate. If Dr. Hawker has offended the statutes

which he is bound to obey, your Lordship will be at no loss to discover the authority to which he is amenable, or the tribunal at which he ought to be judged. The bar to which he has hitherto been called by Mr. P. is that of public opinion ; and, my Lord, we need not ask what judges preside at it ; nor can we be ignorant that the witnesses, whose attestations are best received, and most credited there, are slander, malignity, misrepresentation, and ridicule ; especially, if the accused unfortunately happens to be more than ordinarily religious.—Allow me, therefore, my Lord, to implore your interference ; and surely I shall not ask in vain, if it should appear to you, as I think it must, that such an interference is necessary for the vindication of a clergyman's character from unsubstantiated impeachment.

I am sorry to find, that Mr. Polwhele has dared to insult your Lordship's understanding, by an insinuation of the doctrine, by the open statement of which he endeavoured in his former letters to cajole the public : I mean, the ridiculous doctrine, that the endeavours of a Minister of the Gospel to proclaim

proclaim the glad tidings of salvation, are never, on any account, to be employed, but within the circumference of his own appropriated pulpit, under the penalty of his being stigmatized as an itinerant fanatic. It belongs rather to your Lordship's province than mine, to reprove this fetterforth of strange opinions—Strange indeed! —Mr. Polwhele had need establish a claim to an infallibility, as compleat as was ever imputed to the Papacy, before he ventures to expect one convert to his opinion, that it is a crime for a Minister to accede to the earnest request of a neighbour and a friend, who begs him to lend a helping hand in the great work which he is anxious to see performed.—I affirm, and perhaps your Lordship can testify with how much justice, that in the principal instance adduced by Mr. P. of Dr. Hawker's itinerancy, he (the Dr.) occupied the pulpit, not only with the permission, but at the earnest solicitation of the Rector of the parish.—But, my Lord, if you can pardon Mr. Polwhele's intrusion of his misrepresentations on your notice; I, surely, have no right to resent his presumption.

Permit me, my Lord, with all becoming humility and respect, to suggest a few hints for your consideration, which, through the necessary application of your thoughts to more urgent matters, may not yet have occurred to you.

It is manifest, from the stile in which Mr. Polwhele has addressed your Lordship, that he wishes to persuade the public to believe, that you approve his attack on Dr. Hawker. The insinuation does you so much wrong, that every one, that is at all acquainted with your character, must instantly and indignantly repel it.—It is not in the power of Mr. Polwhele to induce us to credit, for a moment, that you will patiently tolerate, still less that you have positively sanctioned his endeavours, to overwhelm a laborious Minister of the Gospel with foul obloquy, for doing that, which, if it be an error, is one of the judgment, and not a vice of the heart. No, my Lord, we scorn the thought, that one, who graces with an apostolic spirit the apostolic dignity which he inherits, can approve the feuds, by which religion bleeds, and her ministers
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are harrassed and degraded.—Indeed, although Mr. Polwhele flatters himself with a contrary opinion, I am persuaded, that his first and second Letters to Dr. Hawker could not have attracted your notice till very lately. Had you seen either of them soon after its publication, you would doubtless have enjoined its suppression; and recommended the writer of it to study the beautiful exhortation of St. Paul, to “put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice.”* You would also unquestionably have scrutinized the charges adduced against Dr. Hawker, in order, that if any of them could be substantiated, he might be “admonished as a brother.” Had the opportunity offered itself to your Lordship, of adopting

* It is much to be wished, that at the next Visitation which Mr. Polwhele attends, this exhortation might be made the subject of the Preacher's admonitions. The favor which Mr. P. has conferred upon his brethren, in pointing out “that mode of *preaching* which becomes a Clergyman,” might then be repaid, by one of his brethren instructing him in that mode of *writing and acting* which becomes such a sacred character. Whether his discourse would be such as Bishop Buller would have “highly approved,” I cannot surmise: but I think the Great Bishop of souls would applaud the man who should faithfully execute such an important duty.

adopting such wise, temperate, and apostolic conduct, it would have furnished a pleasing illustration of St. Paul's direction to the Corinthian converts, that they should adjust their differences among themselves, and not make the unbelieving world the carping spectators of their controversial discussions.

It is needless for me, in writing to your Lordship, to say any thing in vindication of Dr. Hawker's character. You know him to be indefatigable in discharging the duties of his important and extensive parish; and that he lives and labours for only one purpose, the service of his Lord and Master. In pursuing this endeavour, he, no doubt, uses such means as appear to his conscientious judgment most effectual to promote it. If, in the selection and adoption of those means, he is found to differ somewhat from the generality of his brethren, it becomes them well to consider, whether his practice or their's is most congenial to the spirit of the Gospel, most conducive to the purposes of their ordination, and to the eternal welfare of the souls committed to their charge.

I assure you, my Lord, it has excited no weak emotion of regret among the thinking part of mankind, to observe, that a trifling informality in doing good attracts so much more odium from the generality of persons, than any irregularity in doing evil: that while one Minister escapes unnoticed, or at least unreprieved, for deviations from the *spirit* of the establishment; another is hunted down by the fury even of his own brethren, for an omission of one or two of the less important *forms* of it.

Mr. Polwhele pays your Lordship a just tribute of praise, for “ having well portrayed the character of that amphibious Minister of the Gospel, who, though ordained to the Church, and enjoying its emoluments, yet betrays, in his doctrines and demeanor, an attachment to the conventicle.”—It remains for you, my Lord, to increase the obligation which the religious world owe you for this picture, by portraying, when next you address your Clergy, “ the character of that amphibious Minister of the Gospel, who, though ordained to the service of Christ, and entrusted

“ trusted and appointed to watch over his
 “ flock, betrays such a predominant attach-
 “ ment to the world, its pleasures, and its
 “ profits, as is totally inconsistent with the
 “ nature of his profession, and incompatible
 “ with a faithful discharge of its duties.”—

When this character is drawn, your Lordship may leave it to Mr. Polwhele’s “ habitual vigilance,” to discover if there exists any person to whom it applies.

The state of the public mind cannot, perhaps, be fairly judged, but from the combination of several different considerations. Our estimation of it would be woe-ful indeed, did we appreciate its soundness from an observation of the aspects which it wears towards certain opposite characters among the Clergy. It is a fact which defies controversy, that while one Minister is welcomed with smiles on his entering a ball-room, and gratified with presentations to livings on his return from a shooting-party, a horse-race, or a fox-chace; another Minister is scorned and insulted, because the envy or malevolence of some enemy imputes to him some unimportant omission of ceremony

mony or form, while he has been zealously proclaiming the invitations of the Gospel in the sanctuary of his God, or administering the balm of its consolations in the chambers of the dying.

In truth, my Lord, the worst itinerancy that I know of, is that of a man rambling, or going out of his way (like Mr. Polwhele) to violate peace, good manners, and Christian charity. And the most injurious non-conformity appears to me to consist in a person's dissenting (like Mr. Polwhele) from the temper, the practice, and the precepts of Christ and his Apostles. In saying this, however, I by no means intend to insinuate, but that itinerancy and non-conformity, properly so called, meet my firm disapprobation, howsoever or by whomsoever committed. But I should be alarmed for the state of my intellects, had I the folly to attach the imputation of these faults to every one, who complied with the request of a brother Clergyman occasionally to occupy his pulpit, or who did not scrupulously make, what has been called "the law of fools," the sole standard of his practice.

I assure you, my Lord, that no man can plead for a more compleat conformity to the laws of the Church, than that which I am desirous of preserving, and would zealously inculcate. But—I am not yet arrived at that state of arrogance, to expect (like Mr. Polwhele) that my private sentiments are to constitute a public law, whereby all my brethren are to be tried, and, for a transgression of which, they are to be called by all those hard names, which Mr. Polwhele has so liberally accumulated on the head of Dr. Hawker. Mr. P. should be reminded, that ridicule is not the test of truth, neither is detraction the best cure of error. It was the opinion of a very wise man, that when “the righteous smite and reprove,” it is in a “friendly” manner.*

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* On these principles, I cannot but disapprove the stile assumed by a writer, who, under the signature of “Unus Solus,” has addressed Mr. Polwhele, on the subject of his intemperate abuse of Dr. Hawker. If this writer aimed at benefiting Mr. P. by making him sensible of his faults, he has been injudicious in his choice of the means of accomplishing this: But if he only designed to chastise him, he has been as successful as he could desire.—The quotation from Pope, with which he prefaced the advertisement of his pamphlet, so accurately expresses the feelings under which I have written this letter, that I have adopted a part of it; which, with two additional lines from the same poem, I have introduced at the head of the title-page.

I rejoice to learn from Mr. Polwhele himself, that his letter to your Lordship is to close his labours in this controversy. As his war-song has been chaunted in so loud a key, and with such a constant recurrence of discordant tones, methinks, I could have wished that his last notes had been somewhat softer, somewhat sweeter, somewhat better calculated to calm the minds, which had been ruffled by the shrill blasts which he had before been blowing. But my wishes are formed too late, and my regrets are fruitless. Yet I will not abandon the hope, which my heart would fain indulge, that the hour may yet arrive, when Mr. Polwhele, convinced of his errors, and ashamed of his bitterness, shall desire nothing so ardently, as to be allowed to "pour oil and wine" into those wounds, which, by his letters, he has endeavoured to inflict on the peace and reputation of a brother, and a Christian.

With this sentiment on my mind, I desire to conclude my observations on this gentleman. If I detain your Lordship's notice a little longer, it will be from a wish, which I feel, to submit to you a few considerations

derations on a passage quoted by Mr. Polwhele from your late charge, respecting a doctrine, the maintainers of which must feel themselves to be somewhat wronged by your Lordship's statement of it. Your words, as quoted by Mr. Polwhele, are these—
 “ There arises in the minds of some men,
 “ a notion of, I know not what, evangelical
 “ righteousness, totally distinct from that
 “ moral virtue which is properly a part of
 “ it, and attainable by some secret and un-
 “ defined communication with the Deity.”

As your Lordship so candidly confesses that you know not what this evangelical righteousness is, the notion of which you so peremptorily condemn, I trust that I shall stand acquitted of presumption, if I request your permission to state the following circumstances.—In the first place, by this evangelical righteousness we understand no other than that, which “ God declared for the remission of sins” *—that, which “ is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” †—that,
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* Romans, iii. ch. 25 v.

† Philippians, iii. ch. 9 v.

which “ is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe”*—that, which was declared to be “ imputed to all them that believe, though they be not circumcised”†—that which the Apostle intends, when he says, “ we are made the righteousness of God in Christ”‡—that which is said to be “ accounted to us before God only, for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith; and not for our own works or deservings.”§—Such, my Lord, is that evangelical righteousness, of which a notion has been, and will, I trust, long continue to be entertained. If those who have imbibed this notion, appear still to you to be misled, you will at least allow, that they are the dupes of no ordinary deceivers.

But, I observe, that your Lordship objects to this righteousness, because it is supposed to be “ totally distinct from that moral virtue which you deem to be a part of it.”—That it is distinct, in one sense, we

B affirm;

* Romans, iii ch. 22 v. † Romans, iv ch. 11 v.

‡ 2 Corinth. v ch. 21 v.

§ Eleventh Article of the Church of England.

affirm ; but, that it is not distinct, in another sense, we not only allow, but maintain. This evangelical righteousness may be considered as distinct from moral virtue, inasmuch as it is not the same with it ; for this righteousness which belongs to, and is comprehended under the idea of justification, is not the same thing as a moral virtue which is a fruit and effect of sanctification. On the other hand, this evangelical righteousness may be considered as *not* distinct from moral virtue, if the word distinct be understood to import separation ; for, so far are they from being totally distinct, in this sense, that they are, in truth, most intimately connected ; this moral virtue, together with all good works, being “ the fruits of faith, which follow after justification, and spring out necessarily of that true and lively faith” whereby we are justified.*—But, I need not detain your Lordship longer on this point ; and therefore proceed to notice the declaration, that this evangelical righteousness is supposed “ to be attainable by
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* Twelfth Article of the Church of England.

some secret and undefined communication with the Deity." I may venture to answer, in behalf of all the supporters of the notion objected to by your Lordship, that they have no idea of this righteousness being attainable otherwise than by faith. Now, however it may be said of faith, that it is "*secret*," (for, like every other spiritual act, it is neither tangible nor visible, as bodily substances are) yet, it cannot be said, that it is "*undefined*." In this circumstance therefore, no less than in those already discussed, it appears, that your Lordship has formed your view of this notion from the representation of its enemies, who, perhaps, desiring to excite your Lordship's dislike towards it, arrayed it in language which perverted its simplicity, and disguised its truth, insomuch, that you were prevented from justly appreciating its merits.

But, my Lord, it is time for me to close the address, which I have the honour to present to you. Allow me to add, in conclusion, that in writing to you, I have considered myself not as the advocate of an individual, but the friend of a great and

public cause. The evil of Mr. Polwhele's conduct does not terminate in Dr. Hawker. The example which he has exhibited is to be dreaded, because it is contagious;* and his impunity may prove an encouragement to future enemies of our faith, to attack and vilify its most active supporters. Should the spirit which has been operating at Manaccan spread unrestrained through your diocese, there is no calculating the mischiefs which may be engendered. For the averting such evils, we look to your Lordship's wisdom and integrity; assured, that from the active exertion of these, the turbulent will receive restraint, the calumniated will obtain vindication, and the friends of religion

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* An instance of this has already appeared. An obscure person, of the name of Wotton, observing, in the case of Mr. Polwhele, how easy it was to call names and set up accusations, would needs commence pamphleteer also. Mr. P. appears to have hailed his coadjutor with great cordiality, and even rates his assistance highly. This we might account for; since passion and prejudice might easily make a dupe of his taste, and cheat him into an approbation of what his unbiassed judgment must have despised. But it is difficult to conjecture, how his infatuation could approximate so near to delirium, as to prompt Mr. P. to insult the Bishop, with repetitions of the impertinences and vulgarities of this *acute and sensible* Mr. Wotton !!!

gion and its ministers will derive solid matter of confidence and rejoicing.

With the assurance of my unfeigned respect, I take my leave; and am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

S. T. T.



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tion and its ministers will derive solid
matter of confidence and respect.

With the assurance of my distinguished
respect, I take my leave, and am,

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